

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05 L-01

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SWF-01 AID-05 CEA-01 COME-00 EB-04 FRB-01

CIEP-01 STR-01 TRSE-00 LAB-01 SIL-01 SAM-01 OMB-01

AF-04 ARA-06 EA-06 NEA-06 ACDA-05 AGR-05 FEA-01 SAJ-01

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3740

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EALR, ECIN, EGEN, FR

SUBJECT: VIEWS OF ELYSEE OFFICIAL ON EUROPEAN SUMMIT

SUMMARY: FRANCE HAS RECEIVED GREEN LIGHT FROM WEST
GERMANY, UK, AND ITALY AND EUROPEAN SUMMIT WILL BE HELD
BEFORE END OF YEAR. WHETHER IT CAN BE SCHEDULED BEFORE
OR AFTER GISCARD-FORD MEETING DEPENDS ON BRITISH
(FRENCH PREFERENCE FOR SUMMIT AT END OF NOVEMBER CON-
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FLICTS WITH LABOR PARTY CONGRESS). UNDER PRESSURE FROM

EC PARTNERS, FRENCH HAVE AGREED THAT SUMMIT WILL PLACE EQUAL EMPHASIS ON ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND STRENGTHENING OF POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS AND COOPERATION. (FRENCH HAD ORIGINALLY PROPOSED THAT SUMMIT BE DEVOTED PRIMARILY TO LATTER.) FRENCH SEE PROGRESS TOWARD BUILDING OF POLITICAL EUROPE AS PROCEEDING ON TWO TRACKS -- STRENGTHENING SUPRANATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN AREAS COVERED BY EUROPEAN TREATIES AND STRENGTHENING POLITICAL COOPERATION AMONG NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS IN AREAS NOT COVERED BY TREATIES. FRENCH ARE DESCRIBING THEIR NEW WILLINGNESS TO CONSIDER MEASURES TO STRENGTHEN SUPRANATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AS REPRESENTING A SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN FRENCH POLICY. END SUMMARY.

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH ECON/COM MIN, DUTET, ECONOMIC COUNSELOR AT ELYSEE, DESCRIBED CURRENT GOF THINKING ON EUROPEAN SUMMIT WHICH GISCARD HAS PROPOSED BEFORE END OF THE YEAR. DUTET SAID THAT ALTHOUGH NOT ALL FRANCE'S EC PARTNERS HAD ACCEPTED GISCARD'S INVITATION, THE THREE PRINCIPAL ONES -- WEST GERMANY, THE UK AND ITALY-- HAD, AND, SINCE IT WAS UNTHINKABLE THAT THE SMALLER COUNTRIES WOULD BLOCK AN INITIATIVE ON WHICH THE BIG FOUR WERE IN AGREEMENT, IT WAS CERTAIN THE SUMMIT WOULD BE HELD. HOWEVER, A DATE HAD NOT YET BEEN SET. GISCARD WAS HOPING FOR A DATE IN THE LATTER PART OF NOVEMBER OR THE FIRST FEW DAYS OF DECEMBER SO THAT IT WOULD TAKE PLACE BEFORE HIS MEETINGS WITH BREZHNEV AND PRESIDENT FORD. THIS TIMING CREATED PROBLEMS FOR THE BRITISH BECAUSE OF THE LABOR PARTY CONFERENCE SCHEDULED FOR THE END OF NOVEMBER. THEREFORE, IT MIGHT BE NECESSARY TO HOLD THE SUMMIT AFTER THE GISCARD-FORD MARTINIQUE MEETING.

2. TURNING TO THE AGENDA, DUTET SAID THE GOF'S OBJECTIVE WAS TO ACCELERATE PROGRESS TOWARD EUROPEAN UNIFICATION SIMULTANEOUSLY ALONG TWO TRACKS: SUBSTANTIVE PROBLEMS (E.G., INFLATION, ENERGY, HARMONIZATION OF NATIONAL ECONOMIC POLICIES) AND THE STRENGTHENING OF INSTITUTIONS, INCLUDING STEPS WHICH WOULD RESULT IN A CERTAIN "TRANSFER OF SOVEREIGNTY" FROM NATIONAL GOVERNMENT TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MENTS (E.G., MAJORITY VOTING IN THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, ELECTION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT BY UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE).

3. ECON/COM MIN ASKED WHETHER THIS DID NOT REPRESENT A CHANGE IN FRENCH THINKING. HE HAD EARLIER UNDERSTOOD THAT THE GOF HAD CONCLUDED THAT PROGRESS ON ECONOMIC PROBLEMS WAS EFFECTIVELY BLOCKED BECAUSE OF THE WORLD

ECONOMIC CRISIS AND THAT THE GOF HAD DECIDED THAT THE ONLY PRACTICABLE WAY OF MAINTAINING MOVEMENT TOWARD THE GOAL OF EUROPEAN UNIFICATION WAS BY TRYING TO MAKE PROGRESS ON THE POLITICAL SIDE (SEE PARIS 21322). DUTET AGREED THAT THERE HAD BEEN A CHANGE. HE SAID THIS CHANGE HAD RESULTED FROM PRESSURE FROM FRANCE'S PARTNERS, SOME OF WHOM BELIEVED THAT IT WAS ESSENTIAL TO TALK ABOUT ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, OTHERS WHO WERE UNENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT FRENCH PROPOSALS ON POLITICAL PROGRESS. ON LATTER POINT, DUTET CONFIRMED THAT RECEPTION OF FRANCE'S EC PARTNERS TO SAUVAGNARGUES' POLITICAL PROPOSALS AT RECENT COUNCIL OF MINISTERS' MEETING IN LUXEMBOURG HAD BEEN LUKEWARM. IN PARTICULAR, SEVERAL MINISTERS HAD REACTED COOLLY TO THE FRENCH PROPOSALS ON STRENGTHENING SUPRANATIONAL INSTITUTIONS.

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4. ECON/COM MIN ASKED WHY THIS SHOULD HAVE BEEN SO. THE PROPOSALS SEEMED QUITE MODEST IN SCOPE. IN FACT, GISCARD'S PLAN FOR ACCELERATING PROGRESS TOWARD BUILDING POLITICAL EUROPE SEEMED TO MANY OBSERVERS HEAVILY WEIGHTED ON THE SIDE OF THE FOUCHE PLAN -- "L'EUROPE DES PATRIES" CONCEPTS LAUNCHED BY GENERAL DE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GAULLE IN THE EARLY 60'S AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO A SUPRANATIONAL EUROPE. DUTET SAID THAT THIS WAS NOT ENTIRELY CORRECT. HERE AGAIN THE GOF ENVISAGED SIMULTANEOUS PROGRESS ON TWO TRACKS -- PROGRESS IN STRENGTHENING SUPRANATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN MATTERS COVERED BY THE EUROPEAN TREATIES AND PROGRESS IN POLITICAL COOPERATION AMONG NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS (AS DISTINGUISHED FROM POLITICAL INTEGRATION) IN MATTERS NOT COVERED BY THE TREATIES. DUTET SAID THE DECISION TO SUPPORT THE STRENGTHENING OF SUPRANATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND TO ACCEPT "TRANSFERS OF SOVEREIGNTY" REPRESENTED A SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN FRANCE'S EUROPEAN POLICY. HE ADDED THAT THE GOF ENVISAGED THE PROGRESSIVE ESTABLISHMENT OF LINKS BETWEEN THE TWO TRACKS SO THAT AT SOME FUTURE DATE, ADMITTEDLY NOT SOON, "L'EUROPE DES PATRIES" AND THE EUROPE OF SUPRANATIONAL INSTITUTIONS WOULD MERGE INTO SOME FORM OF EUROPEAN STATE. THE PRINCIPAL OPPOSITION TO THE FRENCH THINKING, DUTET SAID, CAME FROM THE UK AND DENMARK, WHO WERE UNENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE PROPOSALS RELATING TO SUPRANATIONAL INSTITUTIONS.

5. ECON/COM MIN ASKED WHETHER THESE IDEAS FOR A "TRANSFER OF SOVEREIGNTY DID NOT RISK AROUSING SERIOUS OPPOSITION AMONG THE GAULLISTS. THERE HAD BEEN RECENT RUMBLINGS FROM DEBRE, FOR EXAMPLE. DUTET REPLIED THAT THIS WAS NOT REALLY A PROBLEM. GISCARD'S INDEPENDENT REPUBLICANS AND THE REFORMATEURS WERE BOTH SOLIDLY BEHIND THE PRESIDENT AND, EVEN AMONG THE GAULLISTS, ONE COULD COUNT ON THE FINGERS OF ONE HAND THOSE WHO WERE STRONGLY OPPOSED.

6. COMMENT. IT IS TOO EARLY TO JUDGE THE ACCURACY OF DUTET'S CONTENTION THAT THE GOF HAS EMBARKED ON A SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN FRANCE'S EUROPEAN POLICY BY SEEKING TO STRENGTHEN THE EC SUPRANATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND BY ACCEPTING A GREATER DEGREE OF "TRANSFERS OF SOVEREIGNTY." THE UPCOMING EC-NINE SUMMIT MAY SHED MORE LIGHT ON THE FUTURE DIRECTION OF GISCARD'S EUROPEAN POLICY ON THESE PARTICULAR POINTS. MEANWHILE, IT IS UNCLEAR WHETHER THE FRENCH PROPOSALS FOR EC LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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INSTITUTIONAL REFORMS TABLED BY SAUVAGNARGUES IN LUXEMBOURG EARLIER THIS MONTH REALLY REPRESENT A NEW WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT TRANSFER OF FRANCE'S NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY. THE "MAJORITY VOTING" PROPOSAL IS CAVEATED BY AN EXCEPTION FOR ISSUES INVOLVING "VITAL" NATIONAL INTERESTS. ONLY THE ACTUAL OPERATION OF THIS FRENCH PROPOSAL WOULD REVEAL WHETHER IT IS A MOVE TOWARD SUPRANATIONALITY INVOLVING "TRANSFER OF SOVEREIGNTY," OR WHETHER IT PACKAGES THE CURRENT PRACTICE IN REWRAPPING. SIMILARLY, FRANCE'S ESPOUSAL OF DIRECT ELECTION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DOES NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT FRENCH INTENTION TO ACCORD TO THE EC PARLIAMENT GREATER POWERS GOING BEYOND THE EFFECTIVE CONTROL OF THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS. WE SHOULD NOT MINIMIZE THE CHANGE IN FRANCE'S APPROACH TO EUROPE WHICH ITS INSTITUTIONAL INITIATIVES REPRESENT. GISCARD IS DEMONSTRATING THAT HE IS PREPARED TO EXTEND "CHANGE WITHOUT RISK" EVEN TO 16 YEARS OF GAULLIST POLICY TOWARD EUROPE. A WILLINGNESS TO ESPOUSE EVEN MODERATE STEPS TOWARD GREATER SUPRANATIONALISM INVOLVES A DEPARTURE FROM PREVIOUS FRENCH POLICY. HOWEVER, ONLY TIME WILL TELL HOW FAR DOWN THIS ROAD FRANCE IS PREPARED TO GO. STONE

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